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Agenda item 5

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

Note by the Secretariat

1. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1984 (LVII) of 1 August 1974, requested the Secretary-General to submit, at each session of a functional commission or subsidiary body of the Council, a draft provisional agenda for its following session and to indicate the documents to be submitted under each agenda item and the legislative authority for their preparation.

2. Pursuant to Council resolution 1979/41, the draft provisional agenda for its subsidiary bodies, together with the list of requested documentation, is submitted to the Council for its review, in order, inter alia, to establish greater consistency between the documentation of those bodies and the overall documentation requested by the Council and other subsidiary bodies and greater consistency between the requests for documentation and the medium-term plan and the programme budget.

3. The Council, in resolution 1982/50 on the revitalization of its work, endorsed the recommendation of the Secretary-General that the documentation and programme of work of the subsidiary bodies of the Council should also be streamlined in order to enable them to perform effectively the functions entrusted to them.

4. The draft provisional agenda for the twenty-seventh session of the Statistical Commission will be completed at the present session in the light of resolutions and decisions adopted and requests made by the Commission during the present session and will be submitted to the Council for review, in accordance with Council resolution 1979/41. The following draft provisional agenda has been prepared on the basis of existing legislative authority:

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

3. Special topics (see paras. 5-8 below).

4. National accounts and balances.

Documentation

Final draft of the revised System of National Accounts

5. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes.

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination on its fourteenth session

6. Programme questions.

Documentation

Draft work programme of the Statistical Office for 1994-1995, proposed revisions of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 and information on programme performance during 1990-1991.

7. Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-eighth session of the Commission.

8. Report of the Commission on its twenty-seventh session.

5. With regard to item 3 of the draft provisional agenda (Special topics), the Commission will recall that the practice of holding discussions on special issues began at the twenty-second session. Since then, the following subjects have been covered:

Twenty-second session

Administrative records

Information technology

Publication policy for statistics

Twenty-third session

Meeting user needs for, and improving the dissemination of, international statistics

Future direction of work on social indicators

Publication policy for statistics

Twenty-fourth session

Communications between national and international statistical agencies and the development of data bases

Special problems of the statistically least developed among the developing countries

Twenty-fifth session

Co-ordination of international statistical activities

Selection and recruitment of professional staff for work in national statistical offices and statistical services of the United Nations

Twenty-sixth session

Increasing user awareness of the value of statistical outputs and services

Implications of structural adjustment and the debt crisis for national and international statistical services

6. The Statistical Commission, at its twenty-third session, and the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination, at its twelfth session, considered the question of special topics to be taken up by the Commission following its twenty-fifth session. The Working Group did not consider it desirable to select topics in 1987 for a session to be held in 1991 since priorities and concerns might change. It therefore requested the Statistical Office to condense the consolidated list of special topics into a short list of approximately 10 topics to assist the Commission at its twenty-sixth session in selecting special topics for future discussion (see E/CN.3/1989/20, para. 2).

7. The remaining items on the condensed list of special topics are as follows:

1. The European single market: implications for international statistics;

2. Statistical needs related to the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade;

3. Statistical education and training, particularly in developing countries;

4. Improving statistics on the situation of women;

5. The use of CD-ROMs and similar portable mass storage media for the dissemination of statistics;

6. Improving timeliness in national and international statistical work;

7. The role of international work related to statistical methods;

8. The role of non-governmental organizations in international statistical work.

8. It is the Secretariat's view that a maximum of one topic should be selected for special discussion, bearing in mind resource constraints on the preparation of documentation for the Commission and that at recent sessions, the Commission has been requested to include additional items in its agenda in response to decisions of the Economic and Social Council. The Secretariat would further propose that the Commission request the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination to select one topic, in light of the Commission's suggestions at the present session, from the unused topics on the consolidated list.